

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1 (currently amended): A sheet cutter for cutting a sheet piece from a sheet by shearing, the sheet cutter comprising:  
    a fixed blade;  
    a movable blade which is movable along the fixed blade; and  
    an apparatus for estimating a lifetime of the movable blade. ~~An apparatus of estimating a lifetime of a cutter for cutting a sheet comprising:~~  
        a motor for driving the movable blade;  
        a detector for detecting a value of a parameter representing a cutting resistance during sheet cutting, wherein the parameter is a value of a current loaded on the motor;  
        a comparator for comparing the detected value of the parameter with a predetermined reference value, wherein the comparator determines that the ~~cutter~~ movable blade is unfit for use when the value of the parameter exceeds the predetermined reference value; and  
        an output element for outputting a result based on the comparison; ~~and~~  
        ~~a motor for driving the cutter.~~

2. (canceled).

3 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the detector comprises an ammeter for measuring the value of the current.

4 (withdrawn): An apparatus of estimating a lifetime of a cutter for cutting a sheet comprising:

a detector for detecting a value of a parameter representing a cutting resistance during sheet cutting;

a comparator for comparing the detected value of the parameter with a predetermined reference value; and

an output element for outputting a result based on the comparison;

wherein the parameter is a time that is required from beginning to completion of cutting.

5. (withdrawn): The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the detector comprises a timer element for measuring said time required.

6. (canceled).

7. (original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the comparator is included in a microcomputer.

8. (original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the output element comprises a visual display.

9. (canceled).

10. (currently amended): A method of estimating a lifetime of a sheet cutter for cutting a sheet piece from a sheet by shearing, wherein the sheet cutter comprises a fixed blade; a movable blade which is movable along the fixed blade; and an apparatus for estimating a lifetime of the movable blade ~~a cutter~~ for cutting a sheet; said method comprising the steps of:

(a) detecting a value of a parameter representing a cutting resistance during sheet cutting, wherein the parameter is a value of a current that is loaded onto a motor for driving the cutter;

(b) comparing the detected value of the parameter with a predetermined reference value, wherein it is determined that the ~~cutter~~ movable blade is unfit for use when the value of the parameter exceeds the predetermined reference value; and

(c) outputting a result based on the comparison.

11. (withdrawn): A method of estimating a lifetime of a cutter for cutting a sheet comprising the steps of:

- (a) detecting a value of a parameter representing a cutting resistance during sheet cutting;
- (b) comparing the detected value of the parameter with a predetermined reference value;

and

- (c) outputting a result based on the comparison,
- wherein the parameter is a time that is required from beginning to completion of cutting.

12. (canceled).

13. (withdrawn): A sheet cutter for cutting a sheet piece from a sheet by shearing, the sheet cutter comprising:

- a fixed blade;
- a movable blade which is movable along the fixed blade; and
- a life estimation element for estimating a life span of the movable blade.

14. (withdrawn): The sheet cutter of claim 13, wherein the life estimation element comprises:

- a detector for detecting a value of a parameter representing a cutting resistance during sheet cutting;
- a comparator for comparing the detected value of the parameter with a predetermined reference value; and
- an output element for outputting a result based on the comparison.

15. (withdrawn): The sheet cutter of claim 14, further comprising a motor for driving the cutter, wherein the parameter is a value of a current loaded on the motor.

16. (withdrawn): The sheet cutter of claim 14, wherein the parameter is a time that is required from beginning to completion of cutting.

17. (withdrawn): The sheet cutter of claim 14, wherein it is determined that the cutter is unfit for use when the value of the parameter exceeds the predetermined reference value.

18. (withdrawn): A sheet cutter for cutting a sheet piece from a sheet by shearing, the sheet cutter comprising:

- a fixed blade;
- a movable blade which is movable along the fixed blade;
- a receiving element which receives the sheet piece that is cut off from the sheet, the receiving element being structured so as to be movable together with the movable blade; and
- a life estimation element for estimating a life span of the movable blade.

19. (withdrawn): The sheet cutter of claim 18, further comprising a support for supporting the movable blade and a support for supporting the receiving element, the supports being substantially integral with each other.

20. (withdrawn): The sheet cutter of claim 18, wherein the movable blade comprises a disk which is rotatably supported, and the receiving element comprises a roller which is rotatably supported.

21. (withdrawn): The sheet cutter of claim 18, wherein the receiving element has a groove that receives an edge portion of the piece of sheet which is cut off, which edge portion is in a state in which it hangs down after cutting.

22. (canceled).

23. (currently amended) The sheet cutter for cutting a sheet piece from a sheet by shearing of claim 221, further comprising: a receiving element which receives a sheet piece that is cut off from the sheet, the receiving element being structured so as to be movable together with the movable blade.

24. (previously presented) The sheet cutter of claim 23, further comprising a support for supporting the movable blade and a support for supporting the receiving element, the supports being substantially integral with each other.

25. (currently amended) The sheet cutter of claim 231, wherein the movable blade comprises a disk which is rotatably supported, and the receiving element comprises a roller which is rotatably supported.

26. (previously presented) The sheet cutter of claim 23, wherein the receiving element has a groove that receives an edge portion of the piece of sheet which is cut off, which edge portion is in a state in which it hangs down after cutting.